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State Department of Education Provides Assistance to Idaho Schools to Deal with Emergency Broadband Access Issues

(Boise) The Idaho State Department of Education is working with schools statewide to provide assistance and support to deal with the possibility that the Idaho Education Network will discontinue service.

This morning the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee appropriated 3.6 million dollars to the Superintendent of Public Instruction to help offset the cost for schools to purchase their own internet service from February 11th through June 30th, 2015, and help provide technical assistance to schools.

The State Department of Education is dedicated to helping schools quickly purchase their own internet service, and help schools with technical guidance both in the short and long term. The SDE will be providing technical guidance for RFPs, E-Rate funding, and/or help transition the schools to a new internet service.

Details of the distribution to reimburse schools for their IEN equivalent internet service will be available soon. The SDE is also working on a plan to provide technical assistance to schools in need. Please contact the following individuals if you have questions or need assistance:

Technical and E-Rate	E-Rate	Technical	Wireless
Will Goodman	Todd Lawrence	Mark Hill	Roger Sargent
(208) 332-6970	(208) 332-6959	(208) 332-6972	(208) 332-6977
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There are upcoming deadlines for schools to file for critical E-Rate funding for FY16. Federal E-Rate funds help defray significant portions of the costs of broadband services for schools. E-Rate form 470 must be filed by Feb. 26, 2015. If necessary, schools will also need to publish an RFP by that deadline. E-Rate form 471 must be filed by March 26, 2015, in order to qualify for funding for the next state fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2015.

USAC Website - <http://www.usac.org/sl/>
USAC Deadlines - <http://www.usac.org/sl/tools/deadlines/default.aspx>

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